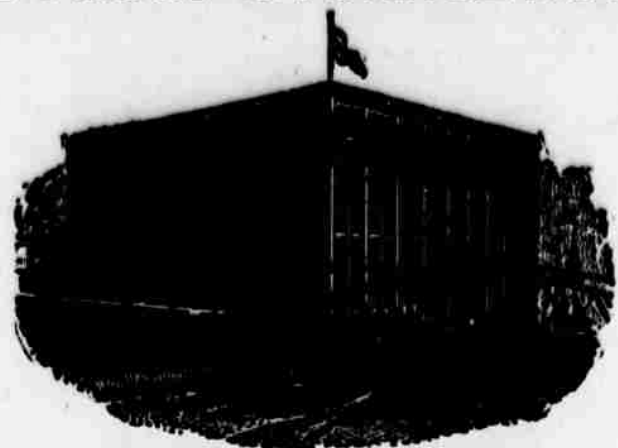


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LITTLE MISS BRAG.

Little Miss Brag has much to say
To the rich little lady from over the way;
And the rich little lady puts out a lip
As she looks at her own white, dainty slip
And wishes that she could wear a gown
As pretty as gingham of faded brown!
For little Miss Brag she lays much stress
On the privileges of a gingham dress—
"Aha,
Oho!"

The rich little lady from over the way
Has beautiful dolls in vast array;
Yet she envies the raggedy home-made
doll

She hears our little Miss Brag extol
For the raggedy doll can fear no hurt
From wet, or heat, or tumble, or dirt!
Her nose is inked, and her mouth is, too,
And one eye's black and the other's blue—
"Aha,
Oho!"

The rich little lady goes out to ride
With footmen standing up outside,
Yet wishes that sometimes, after dark
Her father would tangle her in the park—
That, sometimes, her mother would sing
the things

Little Miss Brag says her mother sings
When through the attic window streams
The moonlight full of golden dreams—
"Aha,
Oho!"

Yes, little Miss Brag has much to say
To the rich little lady from over the way;
And yet who knows but from her heart
Often the bitter sighs upstart—
Uprise to lose their burn and sting
In the grace of the tongue that loves to
sing
Praise of the treasures all its own!
So I've come to love that treble tone—
"Aha,
Oho!"

—(Eugene Field, in Chicago Record.)

The Old Lady's Story.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

"When I was a girl," said the old lady—she was a very, very old lady, eighty-five or more, they said, "things were not as they are now, and the post office, here in America, was not managed as it is to-day. Getting a letter was a serious thing, and sending one more so. I've reason to know that."

"I lived in the country with my aunt and uncle—not my real uncle, for he was my aunt's second husband, and she only an aunt by marriage—but I had no other kin and was glad to have home folk. I had, beside, a cousin by courtesy. His name was Thomas, and that was about all I knew of him for years—he came in and went out without taking any notice of me. His father used to talk about him before me, finding fault with his idleness. Once I heard him say:

"The boy has not the making of a man in him, Cynthia. You wait on him and spoil him, and one day you'll regret it."

"Then aunt asked uncle if he wished her to be hard on the only son out of three."

"Not hard," he answered; "only Tom ought to be taught that he will have to see to himself—we have nothing to leave him. If I should die before you, he ought to be able to support you—and he takes to nothing."

"Tom, by this time, was a young fellow of nineteen, and I was fifteen. Three years later he had no more idea of settling to any business than he had had before, and I had come into a fortune. It was not a large one, but it was enough to make me comfortable for life, and I was glad to stop washing dishes and doing the ironing, and ask my aunt to make me a boarder, since I could pay her well."

"She was pleased, and that day I left my little garret-room under the eaves, and had a large room on the second floor given me."

"Besides paying my board, I hired a servant for the housework, and my aunt thought that very generous. Hitherto I had worn her made-over gowns. Now I sent for Miss Crabtree, the dressmaker, and had plenty of dresses made, giving Aunt Cynthia a rich black silk and a broche slawl. She made a great fuss over them, and I was not surprised that my cousin Tom should begin to be very pleasant to me, for the first time in my life."

"I thought it was because he saw I had kind feelings and was grateful for what had been done for me when I was a little orphan. It was a new thing to be made so much of as I was now, and I enjoyed it. Even when Cousin Tom began to make love to me I never guessed that it was because I had money, as I know it was now."

"Will you marry me, Cousin Belle?" he said one day, and my answer was: "Tom, I feel as if I did not love you the right way, we are too much like brother and sister."

"But he teased me and teased me, until I told him that he might ask me again at the end of the year."

"But you must build no hope on that," I said, "for I think I shall feel just as I do now."

"And now Aunt Cynthia began to praise her boy to me, and to say how glad she should be if he had chosen some one she loved."

"It might be that I would have yielded to this pressure, but that something shortly happened to turn the whole current of my life. It can be told in a few words. I met Arthur Lorrimer at the house of a friend. He devoted himself to me that evening, and he saw me home, and I understood from what he said that he was in love with me. Cousin Tom was furious that I had accepted other escort. We had a scene that very night. Tom was very rough and brutal."

"You have no right to accept another man's attentions," he said. "You are engaged to me."

"Of course this was false, and I told my aunt what I had really said to him. She only cried, and told me that I had no feeling for her poor boy, who loved me so well."

"I might have believed that he loved me, and felt myself guilty, but that a little later, coming down stairs to find my gloves, which I had dropped, and stepping softly, for I thought the whole house was asleep, I saw Aunt Cynthia and her son sitting beside the grate."

"I don't care a rap for the girl!"

here, Tom was saying, 'I know many a one I admire more, but I like her money, and it would slip into my pockets without any trouble. I hate work. And it seemed such a soft thing to get a rich wife.'

"You shall have the child," said the mother. "I can keep that jackanapes away. Fine clothes and city ways have caught her fancy, that is all. Besides, how do you know the man means anything."

"By his looks," said Tom, "I kept wondering what he saw in her pale little face to roll his eyes for. Why, I think she is very nearly plain."

"I went up stairs without my gloves, but my heart was very light. I could have no pity for a fortune-hunter, and the words I had heard made me happy."

"To cut a long story short, I was engaged to Mr. Lorrimer. My aunt heard of his visits, and told me that she hoped I would not leave her until I was married. I knew that the money I contributed to the household was valuable, and agreed to stay. Tom I seldom saw nowadays; when I did, he was sulky."

"I had known all along that my betrothed husband was going to Baltimore for a few months before our marriage, but when the time came, it was very hard to part, and when he was gone I was very sad and lonely. As I told you, in those days the mails were very slow—there were no steam cars."

"For a long time I was not alarmed, but at last a terror beyond words fell upon me, and I expected nothing but to receive tidings of illness or death. What came to me, however, was this:

"A paper in which was marked in pencil a notice of the marriage of Arthur Lorrimer to Augusta, daughter of Everleigh Turner, Esq., and a note in an unknown hand."

"MADAM"—the read—As one of Mr. Lorrimer's closest friends, I am charged with a message to you. You will see that he is married to his love with whom he quarreled two years ago. That love will have its way, is the only excuse he can offer. He prays that you may be happy, and begs you will forgive him."

"A APPLETON."

"I did not faint, I did not weep, when I received this letter, but I felt the shock in every nerve. My cousin had brought the mail from the post office, and as I sat gazing into the fire he touched me on the arm."

"Cousin Belle," he said, "I read the paper on my way home. See now what a false heart you have been trusting in, and setting aside a love that would have lasted you for life."

"Do not utter falsehoods, Cousin Tom, I said. 'You care nothing for me; you want my money, for I heard you tell your mother so. But I will marry you and show this deceiver that I am not pining for him. Only remember, I do not love you any more than you do me; and I will never give you even a kiss.'

"Oh, Belle, I do love you! I said what I did out of pique!" cried Tom, "and I am sorry you heard me. We shall be a very happy couple yet."

"Never!" I said.

"I'll write to this fellow," said Tom. "Pretend we have not heard the news, and tell him you've found out you like me the best, and want to be off with me."

"Yes," I said, "you may do that. I hate you both; but tell any lie you like." And he ran away.

"Sitting in the room where I stood was a looking-glass which reflected a portion of the kitchen. As I happened to turn my eyes that way, I saw my aunt standing near the open fire reading a letter. As she read, she seemed to watch and listen."

"In those days we used both black ink and red for correspondence, and Arthur had a fancy for red. This letter was written in that color. The writing, too, looked at that distance like his, and the secrecy of Aunt Cynthia's manner awakened my suspicions. I took a step forward, and she flung it into the fire, and I saw her run out the garden door. The next instant I was in the kitchen."

"The paper had not blazed up at once, for it had fluttered behind the back log. I caught up the tongs and brought it safely out. It was scorched and yellow, but I knew I could read it; and running to my room, bolted myself in and examined the paper."

"It was a letter from Arthur, and from I learned that he had written many times, and having received no reply, had grown so anxious that he had resolved to come back again."

"I am greatly irritated to-day," he said. "Some rascal has thought it a good joke to publish a false marriage with an unknown, probably imaginary lady. It is unlikely that you will ever see a Baltimore paper, but I cannot help troubling about that, too. However, we shall meet in a few days. The stage should arrive at—next Thursday."

"I saw it all—my cousin had played a deep trick. The advertisement was his work, and he had forged the letter, but I was master at last."

"As for my aunt, the cruel creature had destroyed the letters for which she knew I was longing—she would willingly have broken my heart in order that her son might have my money."

"I believe from what I saw that she had not been able to finish the letter, and was not aware how soon Arthur would arrive for this day was Thursday. I remember, and night was coming on."

"I went down to tea as though nothing had happened. My cousin took my hand and kissed my cheek."

"Here are true hearts," said she, "and we will compensate you for what false ones have made you suffer."

"Marry me to-morrow, my darling," said Tom, "and I can write to that man, not that we are engaged, but that you are my wife."

"A good idea," said I; and just then I heard the rumbling of wheels. A vehicle stopped before the house, and some one tapped heavily with the knocker upon the outer door.

"It is he!" I cried, and in a moment more I was clasped in Arthur's arms.

"Ask me no questions," I cried, "but take me away from these terrible people who would stop at no

crime in order to win what little wealth is mine."

"That very night old Parson Partidge married us, and I left the town with my husband. At my prayer, he forbore to punish Tom, and we have never seen any of those people since, and have lived happily for years amongst my husband's kinsfolk here in Baltimore."—(Family Story Paper.

THE SEA OTTER.

His Fur the Costliest in the World—Shot from Derriks.

Just at the present the Sea Otter is the favorite of the millionaires, and his fur is the costliest in the world. I wonder if any of the wearers of this beautiful fur—so costly that the price of one set would feed a hungry family for two whole years—ever stop to find out how the first wearer was born on a bed of kelp, floating out in the open sea, on the icy cold waters of the Pacific, and literally "rocked in the cradle of the deep;" how he was brought up on the heaving billows, and, when bedtime came, found a soft resting place on his mother's breast, while she floated upon her back and clasped him with her paws as he slept; how the only land he ever saw was the rugged, rock-bound shores of Alaska or Washington. Now and then, when the ocean was very rough, and before the hunters were so bad, he used to crawl up upon a rock and lie there, while the roar of the breakers boomed in his ears and the breakers dashed over him in torrents. But then, it is probable that not one woman out of every five hundred takes the trouble to learn the life history of the creature whose furry coat she wears."

The Sea Otter is the largest of the Marten family, and is very unlike the family after which the family is named. It has a thick, clumsy body, which, with the round, blunt head, is from three and a half to four feet in length. Unlike those of all other otters, the tail is short and stumpy, being about one-fifth the length of the head and body. As if to increase its value, and hasten its destruction, the skin is much larger than the body, like a misfit coat, and lies loosely upon it in many folds. For this reason the stretched pelt is always much wider and longer than the animal that wore it."

The coat of the full-grown Sea Otter is very dense, very fine, and its color is shimmering, lustrous black. Ever since the earliest discovery of the Sea Otter by the Russians, its fur has been eagerly sought by them, and the cash prices of skins have always been so high that there is not, in the whole United States, a museum rich enough to afford a good series of specimens. Mr. Charles H. Townsend, the naturalist of the United States Fish Commission, writes me that in 1891 the price of the best skins had reached \$400 each, and their value has been since increasing. On the northwest coast of the State of Washington, where Sea Otters are still found along a thirty-mile strip of coast (from Gray's Harbor, half-way to Cape Flattery), they are shot by hunters from tall "derriks" from thirty to forty feet high, erected in the surf half-way between high tide and low tide, and the hunter who kills four Otters in a year considers his work successful."

Owing to the persistent hunting that has been going on ever since Alaska came into our possession, the Sea Otter is rapidly following the buffalo to the State of Extinction."

The favorite food of the Sea Otter is not fish, as one might suppose from the habits of the common Otter, but clams, crabs, mussels, and sea-urchins. Its molar teeth are of necessity very strong, for the grinding up of this rough fare, and the muscles of the jaws are proportionately powerful.—[St. Nicholas.

An Astonished Admiral.

"Sailors, like horsemen, have a tendency to become bow-legged," said Captain S. Wooden, an ex-navy officer, who was at the Southern yesterday. "I once saw an old Admiral whose long sea service had given him legs a decided curvature. He had a singular adventure with a bull dog that was a pet aboard ship. The sailors had taken great pains with the dog's education and taught him a number of tricks. One of his most frequent exploits was to jump through the aperture made by the man holding one of his feet against the other knee. It was a trick that the dog seemed to take great delight in performing. One day the Admiral came on board the ship on a visit of inspection, and while standing on deck conversing with some of the officers was spied by the dog. The Admiral's bow legs seemed to strike the dog as affording the best chance for a running leap he had seen in many a day. Suddenly he made a rush and leap like a whirlwind through the tempting gap. In astonishment at what had passed beneath him, the Admiral turned quickly around to see what was the cause. The dog took this action as a signal for an "encore," and jumped again, barking furiously all the time as a means of showing how much he enjoyed the sport. The bewildered face of the Admiral was too much for the gravity of the spectators, and, forgetting the respect due to rank, they broke into a hearty roar, in which, after he understood the situation, they were joined by the Admiral himself."—[St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Egypt's Smelling Festival.

On Monday next, when the annual custom termed "Shemm en Nessem" (or the Smelling of the Zephyr) will be observed, all Government offices will be closed and the day will be observed as a general holiday throughout the country. Onions will be in great demand, for early on Monday morning many persons, especially women, in accordance with an ancient Egyptian custom, dating from time immemorial, break an onion and smell it. There will also be a wholesale migration into the country for the purpose of "smelling the air," which is believed by the natives of Egypt to have a wonderfully beneficial effect on that day.—[Egyptian Gazette.

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